

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

104th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 395

August 11, 1995, 10:27 a.m.
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DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS/\$6.4 Billion Cut

SUBJECT: Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1996 . . . S. 1087. Stevens motion to table the Kerry motion to recommit with instructions.

ACTION: MOTION TO TABLE AGREED TO, 60-38

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 1087, the Department of Defense Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 1996, will appropriate \$242.7 billion for the military functions of the Department of Defense for fiscal year 1996, which is \$6.4 billion more than requested and \$2.3 billion less than the fiscal year (FY) 1995 funding level.

The Kerry motion to recommit would direct the Appropriations Committee to report the bill back with total appropriations reduced by at least \$6.4 billion, in order to make the appropriated amount equal to or less than the amount requested by the Clinton Administration for defense.

Debate was limited by unanimous consent. Following debate, Senator Stevens moved to table the Kerry motion. Generally, those favoring the motion to table opposed the motion to recommit; those opposing the motion to table favored the motion to recommit.

Those favoring the motion to table contended:

The Kerry motion to recommit is no different than the Kohl amendment which the Senate earlier rejected (see vote No. 364). It is predicated on the offensive assumption that Congress has no business deciding the appropriate amounts to spend on defense. We are not about to adopt that assumption. The President can and should propose spending levels, but it is Congress' constitutional duty to decide exactly how much to appropriate. In the area of defense, Congress has even more of an explicit duty to decide, because the Constitution provides that "Congress shall have the Power To * * * raise and support Armies * * * To provide and maintain a Navy; To make rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces; To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections, and repel Invasions." We take our constitutional responsibilities seriously. We will never serve as a rubberstamp for the President on any spending, but we will especially not serve as a rubberstamp on defense

(See other side)

YEAS (60)			NAYS (38)			NOT VOTING (2)	
Republicans (51 or 94%)	Democrats (9 or 20%)		Republicans (3 or 6%)	Democrats (35 or 80%)		Republicans (0)	Democrats (2)
Abraham	Hutchison	Akaka	Brown	Baucus	Johnston		Bradley ⁻⁴
Ashcroft	Inhofe	Breaux	Grassley	Biden	Kennedy		Simon ⁻²
Bennett	Kassebaum	Ford	Jeffords	Bingaman	Kerrey		
Bond	Kempthorne	Heflin		Boxer	Kerry		
Burns	Kyl	Hollings		Bryan	Kohl		
Campbell	Lott	Inouye		Bumpers	Lautenberg		
Chafee	Lugar	Lieberman		Byrd	Leahy		
Coats	Mack	Nunn		Conrad	Levin		
Cochran	McCain	Robb		Daschle	Mikulski		
Cohen	McConnell			Dodd	Moseley-Braun		
Coverdell	Murkowski			Dorgan	Moynihan		
Craig	Nickles			Exon	Murray		
D'Amato	Packwood			Feingold	Pell		
DeWine	Pressler			Feinstein	Pryor		
Dole	Roth			Glenn	Reid		
Domenici	Santorum			Graham	Rockefeller		
Faircloth	Shelby			Harkin	Sarbanes		
Frist	Simpson				Wellstone		
Gorton	Smith						
Gramm	Snowe						
Grams	Specter						
Gregg	Stevens						
Hatch	Thomas						
Hatfield	Thompson						
Helms	Thurmond						
	Warner						

EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE:

1—Official Business
2—Necessarily Absent
3—Illness
4—Other

SYMBOLS:

AY—Announced Yea
AN—Announced Nay
PY—Paired Yea
PN—Paired Nay

spending.

Senators should use their own minds to decide if the spending in this bill that was not requested by President Clinton is advisable. First, the President requested two DDG-51 destroyers. By the year 2000, the Department of Defense's master plan is to have 15 such destroyers. The Appropriations Committee decided not to spread out the purchases as much as planned by President Clinton in order to achieve economies of scale; it called for 4 destroyers next year. The savings from purchasing 4 ships in 1 year instead of purchasing 4 ships in separate years will be \$1.4 billion. Another large appropriation that was added by the Committee is for the LHD-7 amphibious ship. After debating this issue on a previous amendment, nearly three-fourths of Senators found the need for this ship to be compelling. Our colleagues, by going back to the President's budget, would be saying that the Senate's opinion does not matter--the President should decide defense spending. A third major addition is \$777 million in funding for Guard and Reserves procurement. President Clinton requested a pittance, knowing full well that Congress would increase his request. Considering this President's willingness to use military forces around the world, considering his steady downsizing of those forces, and considering the resulting increased reliance on reserve forces, one may conclude that it was not very charitable to fail to call for any procurement items for the reserves. Perhaps the President wanted to have lower overall budget numbers; whatever his motivation, we are not about to fail to provide the equipment that the Guard and Reserves need. Other additions include funding for FNA-18 aircraft, F-15s, and F-16s. Again, the purpose is to meet high priorities with large purchases in order to achieve economies of scale. Next, the appropriators added \$300 million to accelerate development of a national missile defense system. We have had several votes on that issue. Do our colleagues believe we were voting on something that was not for us to decide? Do they believe we should have just deferred to the President? Other additions are for the Coast Guard, the Comanche helicopter, and hurricane aircraft.

All of the additions were made to this bill because the appropriators thought they were needed. Many of those additions have been endorsed in subsequent votes by the whole Senate. This bill has not been larded up with pork, but if it were, it would be the constitutional duty of Senators to strike out those items with which they disagreed. They were not elected to hand the defense budget over to the President. The Kerry motion to recommit would inappropriately defer to the President. We therefore urge its rejection.

Those opposing the motion to table contended:

Americans are concerned about many issues. How high to increase the defense budget is not one of them. They are worried about their declining standards of living, they are worried about crime, and they are worried about the decay in the educational system. We have yet to have any citizens come up to us and say what this country really needs is one more Seawolf submarine or more TOW anti-tank missiles. Nevertheless, our colleagues seem convinced that more defense spending is the top priority of our Nation, because they have insisted on adding an extra \$6.4 billion more to this appropriations bill than was requested by the President and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. We emphatically concur that the United States must have the best military forces in the world, but that does not mean we have to spend money wastefully to get it. Surely if we try we can find more cost-effective ways of providing for the common defense. Commonsense programs, such as scaling back production and maintenance activities to support an arsenal of 4,000 warheads, which is still above the level that we will have once START II is implemented, could save vast sums. With the right leadership in the United States and Russia at this critical juncture in history enormous strides could be made to demilitarize the world. Instead, this bill seems intent on provoking hostility by increasing spending. Senators should rethink this approach. The Kerry motion to recommit would give them one last chance to reduce defense spending to the reasonable level that was requested by President Clinton. We urge them to take that chance.